

Message Text

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SUBJ: SEIYA NISHIDA NAMED MINISTER TO UNITED STATES

1. ON JUNE 4, GOJ ANNOUNCED APPOINTMENT OF SEIYA NISHIDA AS MINISTER IN JAPANESE EMBASSY IN UNITED STATES. CAREER DIPLOMAT, NISHIDA HAS BEEN DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL OF MOFA ECONOMIC AFFAIRS BUREAU SINCE 1972.

2. NISHIDA WAS BORN APRIL 25, 1921 AND, AFTER GRADUATION FROM TOKYO SANGYO UNIVERSITY, ENTERED MOFA IN 1946. LIKE OTHER JAPANESE DIPLOMATS AFTER WAR, HE WAS DETAILED TO GOJ'S CENTRAL LIAISON OFFICE, CONTACT POINT WITH U.S. OCCUPATION FORCES. BETWEEN 1946 AND 1951 HE HELD VARIETY OF POSITIONS, MAINLY IN ECONOMIC AREA, WHICH INCLUDED ASSIGNMENT TO PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (1948-50). RETURNING TO MOFA IN 1951 HE WAS SENT TO US FOR STUDY (INSTITUTION UNKNOWN). BACK IN JAPAN, HE THEN SERVED IN EUROPEAN-AMERICAN BUREAU FROM 1952 TO 1955. NISHIDA'S FIRST OVERSEAS ASSIGNMENT WAS AS THIRD SECRETARY, THEN SECOND SECRETARY, IN JAPANESE EMBASSY IN UK (1955-58).

3. FROM 1958 TO 1962 NISHIDA WORKED IN UNITED NATIONS BUREAU, POLITICAL SECTION. HE WAS THEN ASSIGNED TO MOFA SECRETARIAT (1962-63). WITH DUTIES IN ADMINISTRATIVE VICE
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MINISTER'S OFFICE. DURING 1962-1963, WHILE ATTACHED TO

JAPANESE EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON AS FIRST SECRETARY, HE STUDIED AT HARVARD UNIVERSITY. FOLLOWING YEAR HE WAS POSTED TO IRAN WHERE HE WAS GIVEN COUNSELOR RANK PRIOR TO DEPARTURE IN 1966. AFTER ANOTHER BRIEF TOUR IN MOFA SECRETARIAT, HE WAS TRANSFERRED TO ECONOMIC AFFAIRS BUREAU WHERE, IN SUCCESSION, HE HEADED STERLING AREA, ASIA AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE SECTIONS (1967-69). THEN, AFTER ASSIGNMENT AS COUNSELOR IN JAPANESE EMBASSY IN AUSTRALIA (1969-72), HE ASSUMED CURRENT POST AS DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL, ECONOMIC AFFAIRS BUREAU.

4. NISHIDA AND WIFE, HAMAKO, HAVE SON, SEIICHIRO (21) AND DAUGHTER, MEGUMI (15).

5. ACCORDING TO ECON COUNSELOR, ALTHOUGH RELATIVELY OUTGOING AND DECIDEDLY FRIENDLY TO UNITED STATES, NISHIDA DOES NOT GIVE IMPRESSION OF HAVING FORCEFUL PERSONALITY OR BEING INFLUENTIAL POLICY MAKER. RATHER, HIS OPERATING STYLE IS ONE OF CAUTION, AND HE TENDS TO ASSUME LOW POSTURE. FOR THESE REASONS, ECON COUNSELOR FEELS NISHIDA CAPABILITIES DO NOT MEASURE UP TO THOSE OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS BUREAU DIRECTOR GENERAL HIROMICHI MIYAZAKI OR OTHER DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL REISHI TESHIMA, BOTH OF WHOM APPEAR TO PLAY INFLUENTIAL ROLES IN MOFA AND GOJ.

6. ON OTHER HAND, NEW ZEALAND MINISTER EDWARD FARNON RECENTLY DESCRIBED NISHIDA TO POL COUNSELOR IN SOMEWHAT DIFFERENT TERMS. FARNON INDICATED HIS EMBASSY HAS HAD CLOSE RELATIONS WITH NISHIDA AND SAID HE VIEWED HIM AS COMPETENT, ENERGETIC AND QTE RISING UNQTE OFFICER IN JAPANESE SERVICE. HE ALSO SAID NEW ZEALAND EMBASSY CONSIDERED NISHIDA FAR SUPERIOR TO DIRECTOR GENERAL MIYAZAKI AND CHARACTERIZED HIM AS FORTHCOMING, IMAGINATIVE AND ESPECIALLY WELL-INFORMED. HE NOTED THAT NISHIDA HAD READY ACCESS TO SENIOR MINISTRY LEVELS AND ALSO APPEARED WELL-ACQUAINTED WITH LEADING TANAKA FACTION MEMBERS. FARNON FURTHER CHARACTERIZED NISHIDA AS INDEPENDENT THINKER, NOT COMPLETELY PRO-AMERICAN. HE SPECULATED LATTER ATTITUDE MAY DERIVE FROM FACT NISHIDA DOES NOT CONSIDER HIMSELF MEMBER OF AMERICAN SPECIALIST FRATERNITY AND, INSTEAD, PRIDES HIMSELF ON MORE GLOBAL OUTLOOK.

SHOESMITH

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